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Saigon 3385 8 Sep 67

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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,IO 21,
SAH 02,SAL 01,SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSR 01,L 03,H 02,
P 04,INR 07,EUR 25,AID 30,SPEC 01,/167 W

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RELEASE DENIED ☐
FOIA or PA EXEMPTIONS

P R 180543Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4797
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3818
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2185

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 3385

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: SAIGON 3327

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN TOUR

1. PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNERS CAME TO QUI NHON AFTERNOON AUG 17. SIX PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES PARTICIAPTED IN MEETING: PHAN KHAC SUU, HA THUC KY, TRUONG DINH DZU, VU HONG KHANG, TRAN VAN LY AND NGUYEN DINH QUAT. TRAN VAN HOUNG, PHAM HUY CO AND NGUYEN HOA HIEP WERE REPRESENTED BY THEIR VICE-PRESIDENTIAL RUNNING-MATES. LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES SPOKE FOR SLATES OF NGUYEN VAN THIEU AND HOANG CO BINH.

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2. PROGRAM WENT OFF WITHOUT HITCH. CANDIDATES ARRIVED IN THEIR CHARTERED AIR VIET-NAM DC-3 PRECISELY AT THE

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APPOINTED HOUR OF 1430. THEY WERE MET BY THEIR LOCAL CAMPAIGN REPRESENTATIVES AND WERE ESCORTED TO THE MEETING PLACE, COURTYARD OF NGUYEN HUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, IN A CONVOY OF NUMBERED JEEPS, ONE FOR EACH CANDIDATE AND HIS PARTY. A CROWD OF APPROXIMATELY 3500-4000, LIBERALLY SPRINKLED WITH MILITARY MEN IN UNIFORM, WAS ON HAND TO HEAR CANDIDATES' PRESENTATIONS. POLICE FIELD FORCE PROVIDED SECURITY. ALSO PRESENT WERE SOME 30 MEMBERS OF SAIGON PRESS CORPS, ABOUT HALF OF THEM AMERICANS. CANDIDATES ENTERED ARENA TO TUNE OF MUSIC BY MILITARY BAND, FOLLOWING BRIEF WELCOMING REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN OF LOCAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, SPEECHES BEGAN, CANDIDATES SPEAKING IN AN ORDER DETERMINED BY DRAWING LOTS. EACH WAS ALLOTED FIFTEEN MINUTES.

3. TRUONG DINH DZU, A NATIVE OF BINH DINH, WAS FIRST TO SREAK. DZU MADE NO MENTIONOF HIS LOCAL ANTECEDENTS (PERHAPS BECAUSE HE REPORTEDLY HAS SELDOM IF EVER RETURNED TO THE PROVINCE SINCE HIS DEPARTURE IN 1954). DZU SPOKE OF PEACE AND NATIONAL UNITY. ALTHOUGH HE REPEATED PEACE PLANKS OF

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HIS PLATFORM, INCLUDING AN END TO BOMBING OF NORTH VIET-NAM AND EARLY NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANOI, DZU'S EMPHASIS WAS ON NATIONAL UNITY, WITHOUT WHICH PEACE IS UNATTAINABLE. DZU SAID THAT THIEU AND KY HAVE TALKED MUCH, BUT HAVE DONE LITTLE TO RESTORE NATIONAL UNITY. THEY HAVE IN FACT DONE CERTAIN THINGS WHICH HAVE WEAKENED IT. CHIEF AMONG THESE IS THIEU'S RECENT APPROVAL OF TAM CHAU'S BUDDHIST CHARTER. TAM CHAU'S CHARTER IS INVALID SINCE IT WAS NOT APPROVED BY A UBA CONGRESS, AND GVN DECREE RECOGNIZING THE CHARTER IS BOTH ILLEGAL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL. BZU SUGGESTED THAT THIEU APPROVED IT IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE BUDDHIST DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH WOULD IN TURN PROVIDE AN EXCUSE FOR POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTIONS. DZU PROMISED, IF ELECTED, TO BE MORE RESPECTFUL OF RELIGIONS. HE ALSO THREW A FEW CRUMBS TO CATHOLICS, NOTING THAT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE ALL THE SAVED FRANCE FROM COMMUNISM AFTER WORLD WAR II, AND EXPRESSING HOPE THAT SIMILAR PARTIES COULD BE DEVELOPED IN VIET-NAM. CONTINUING NATIONAL UNITY THEME, DZU SAID HE WOULD DISTINGUISH BETWEEN POLITICAL PRISONERS

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WHO ARE NATIONALISTS AND THOSE WHO ARE COMMUNISTS. DZU RECEIVED FAIR ROUND OF APPLAUSE AT END OF HIS SPEECH. HIS REMARKS ABOUT

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TAM CHAU CHARTER (GUI NHON UBA LEANS TOWARD TRI QUANG); DREW ONLY MODERATE CROWD REACTION.

4. SECOND TO SPEAK WAS NGUYEN DINH QUAT. QUAT REPEATED HIS TV SPEECH, THEME BEING HIS RACE AGAINST DIEM AND RETALIATION WHICH FOLLOWED. HE ONCE AGAIN REMINDED VOTERS THAT HIS SUFFERING HAD BEEN FOR SAKE OF PEOPLE. CROWD APPEARED GENERALLY APATHETIC.

5. MAI THO TRUYEN WAS THIRD SPEAKER. HE APOLOGIZED FOR ABSENCE OF TRAN VAN HUONG, WHOM HE SAID CAUGHT COLD AFTER STANDING IN RAIN AT BIEN HOA. TRUYEN SAID THAT VIET-NAM FACES THREE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS: NEED TO RE-ESTABLISH NATIONAL AUTHORITY, TO REFORM SOCIETY AND TO RESTORE PEACE. HE STRESSED THAT SOLUTIONS TO ALL OF THESE MUST BE BASED ON MORALITY. CROWN WAS VERY ATTENTIVE AS TRUYEN DESCRIBED SAD STATE OF NATION, BREAKDOWN IN MORALITY AND TRUST, ETC. HE MADENO MENTION OF CHARGES LEVELED BY HUONG REGARING CAMPAIGN PRACTICES OF THIEU AND KY. TRUYEN RECEIVED POLITE APPLAUSE, PERHAPS A SOMEWHAT MORE RESPECTFUL BUT LESS ENTHUSIASTIC REACTION THAN THAT ACCORDED DZU.

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6. NEXT SPEAKER WAS TRAN VAN LY. LY ALSOCALLED FOR NATIONAL UNITY,
ND DEPLORED RAMPANT IMMORALITY AND CORRUPTION BESETTING VIET-NAM. HE INVOKED NAMES OF VARIOUS VIETNAMESE HEROES AS WORTHY OF EMULATION. WITH REGARD TO THE WAR, LY EMPHASIZED THAT SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARE WAGING A STRUGGLE OF SELF-DEFENSE, PROTECTING THEMSELVES AGAINST COMMUNIST AGGRESSION. HE ALLOWED TIME FOR ONE OF TWO QUESTIONS. LY EVOKED MINIMAL REACTION FROM CROWD.

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7. FIFTH TO SPEAK WAS NGUYEN THE TRUYEN, REPRESENTING NGUYEN HOA HIEP. TRUYEN DESCRIBED REVOLUTIONARY BACKGROUNDS OF HIEP AND HIMSELF. AUDIENCE GAVE HIM A POLITE HEARING. TRUYEN WAS FOLLOWED BY LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF HIEP-TRUYEN TICKET WHO READ THEIR TEN-POINT PLATFORM.

8. LY QUOC SINH, SPEAKING FOR CO-SINH SLATE, WAS SIXTH. HE REITERATED THEIR PEACE-THROUGH-VICTORY THEME, MAJOR DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF THEIR CAMPAIGN.

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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SAH 02,
SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSE 01,P 04,INR 07,EUR 25,IO 21,
AID 30,SAL 01,L 03,H 02,RSR 01,SPEC 05,/172 W

P R 180543Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4798
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3819
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2186

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9. NEXT WAS VU HONG KHANH. LIKE TRUYEN, KHANH EMPHASIZED HIS REVOLUTIONARY RECORD. KHANH WAS SECONDED BY HIS LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE WHO MADE HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON THIEU AND KY, FIRST SPEAKER TO DO SO. HE NOTED CHARGES MADE BY CIVILIAN CANDIDATES AGAINST GVN FOLLOWING DONG HA INCIDENT, AND MENTIONED WIRE SERVICE REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON SENT MESSAGE TO THIEU STRESSING NEED FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTION. HE CONCLUDED THAT PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S CONCERN LENDS CREDENCE TO CIVILIAN CANDIDATES' COMPLAINTS. CROWD GAVE HIM ONLY A SMATTERING OF APPLAUSE.

10. LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE ALSO SPOKE FOR HOANG CO BINH

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TICKET. HE EXPLAINED TO AUDIENCE THAT SINCE QUANG TRI INCIDENT BINH HAS SET UP HIS OWN CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE AND THUS DID NOT ACCOMPANY THE OTHER CANDIDATES TO QUI NHON. HE IMMEDIATELY OPENED FLOOR TO QUESTIONS, MOST OF WHICH CONCERNED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES AND WHICH HE ANSWERED

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COMPETENTLY.

7. NINTH SPEAKER WAS LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THIEU-KY SLATE, PHAM HOANG. HE BRIEFLY APOLOGIZED FOR ABSENCE OF THIEU AND KY, THEN TOOK HIS SEAT, FORFEITING REST OF HIS ALLOTED TIME. CROWD WAS SURPRISED, ALTHOUGH BECAUSE OF THE THEN LATE HOUR PERHAPS NOT TOO DISAPPOINTED, BY THE BREVITY OF HIS PERFORMANCE.

12. HA THUC WAS TENTH TO APPEAR, ACCOMPANIED BY RUNNING-MATE NGUYEN VAN DINH. HE WAS GREETED BY ROUSING APPLAUSE FROM GROUP OF SUPPORTERS CLUSTERED AROUND SPEAKERS PLATFORM. KY READ HIS ENTIRE SPEECH, ONE OF FEW TO DO SO. HE PLEDGED IF ELECTED TO CARRY OUT A TRUE REVOLUTION; TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL UNITY, ELIMINATE CORRUPTION, HELP UNDERPRIVILEGED, ETC. AUDIENCE RESPONDED HEARTILY. KY ALLOWED SEVERAL MINUTES FOR QUESTIONS, WHICH SEEMED TO COME FROM HIS SUPPORTERS

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SURROUNDING PLATFORM. CROWD APPLAUDED EACH OF HIS RESPONSES. HE WAS ASKED WHETHER HE REALLY INTENDED TO RESIGN IF WITHIN SIX MONTHS HIS ADMINISTRATION HAD NOT MADE NOTABLE PROGRESS. KY SAID HE DID INDEED SO INTEND. ASKED HIS OPINION OF TAM CHAU UBA CHARTER, KY SAID IT IS ILLEGAL AND HIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD ADOPT AN "APPROPRIATE ATTITUDE" TOWARD IT. HIS STATEMENT DREW CONSIDERABLY MORE APPLAUSE THAN DZU'S REMARKS ON SAME SUBJECT. ASKED HIS OPINION OF PRIME MINISTER KY'S ALLEGED THREAT TO OVERTHROW AN ELECTED GOVERNMENT, KY SAID THAT WITH A STRONG ELECTED GOVERNMENT THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN. AT END OF THEIR PRESENTATION KY AND DINH RECEIVED ANOTHER BURST OF APPLAUSE

13. PHAN KHAC SUU AND PHAN QUANG DAN WERE LAST TO APPEAR, AT APPROXIMATELY 1730. AS IN BIEN HOA APPEARANCE, SUU SPOKE ONLY BRIEFLY, REVIEWING HIS RECORD, AND HIS ROLE IN PROGRESS TOWARD CONSTITUTIONALISM. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT CONSTITUTION CAN BE FULLY AND FAITHFULLY IMPLEMENTED. AUDIENCE RESPONDED WARMLY. RAIN BEGAN TO FALL DURING SUU SPEECH. CROWD SOUGHT SHELTER UNDER BREES AND VERANDA OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS, BUT

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MOST REMAINED TO HEAR DR DAN. DAN CRITICIZED INEFFECTIVE-

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NESS OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT, THEN LAUNCHED INTO HARSH ATTACK ON THIEU-KY CAMPAIGN TACTICS. HE SAID THAT THIEU AND KY HAVE AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE IN ELECTION AND SHOULD HAVE RE-SIGNED. DAN CITED "PRESSURES AND DIFFICULTIES" CAUSED BY GOVERNMENT IN CAMPAIGN, AND STRESSED ABSOLUTE NEED FOR FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS. SUU AND DAN DREW APPLAUSE ONLY SLIGHTLY LESS ENTHUSIASTIC THAN THAT GIVEN HA THUC KY.

14. COMMENT: WHILE WAITING FOR CANDIDATES TO ARRIVE, LOCAL CAMPAIGN REPRESENTAVIVES COMPLAINED AT LENGTH TO VIETNAMESE PRESS ABOUT DIFFICULTIES THEY HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN BINH DINH. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY HOANG XUAN TUU, REPRESENTING HA THUC KY IN BINH DINH, CHARGED THAT PROVINCE CHIEF HAS SEVERELY RESTICTED CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRYSIDE. LOCAL REPRE-SENTATIVE OF TRUONG DINH DZU AGREED WITH TUU. THIEU-KY REPRESENTATIVE DISCOUNTED THEIR CHARGES, POINTING OUT THAT NONE OF THEM HAS SEEN FIT TO SUBMIT FORMAL COMPLAINT TO LOCAL ELECTION COUNCIL. IN ANY CASE THERE WAS NO CAUSE FOR DISSATISFACTION IN AUGUST 17 MEETING. IT WAS IMPECCABLY ORGANIZED, AND CANDIDATES AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES (PARTICULARLY HOANG XUANG TUU) SEEMED PLEASED. AMERICAN

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PRESS ALSO APPEARED FAVORABLY IMPRESSED. ONE COMMENTED THAT AFFAIR WENT OFF SO SMOOTHLY "IT SEEMED ALMOST UN-VIETNAMESE."

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